

DECLARATION OF FORMER

PASSAGES AND PROCEEDINGS BETWIXT THE ENGLISH

and the Narragansets, with their confederates, Wherein
the grounds and justice of the ensuing warre are opened
and cleared.

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THE most considerable part of the English Colonies, perceiving
they came into these parts of the world with desire to advance
the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to enjoye his precious
Ordinances with peace, and (to his praise they confesse) he hath not failed
their expectation hitherto, they have found safety, warmth and refreshing
under his wing to the satisfaction of their soules. But they know, and
have considered that their Lord & master is King of righteousness and peace,
that he gives invincible lawes, and casts his subjects into such a mould and
frame, that (in their weak measure) they may hold forth his virtues in their
course and carriage, not only with the nations of Europe, but with the bar-
barous natives of this wilderness. And accordingly both in their treaties &
in peace they have had an awfull respect to divine rules, encouraging to
walk uprightly and inoffensively, & in the midst of many injuries and in-
conveniences to exercise much patience and long suffering towards them.
The Pequots grew to an excess of violence and outrage, and proudly
turned aside from all wayes of justice & peace, before the sword was drawn
or any hostile actions made against them. During those wars, & after
the Pequots were subdued, the English Colonies were carefull to continue
and establish peace with the rest of the Indians, both for the present & for
posterity, as by several treaties with the Narraganset & Mobbeggin Sagamores
may appear: which treaties for a while were in some good measure
duly observed by all the Indians, but of late the Narragansets & especially
the Narraganset confederates have many wayes injuriously broke & vio-
lated the same by entreating and keeping amongst them, not only many of
the Pequot nation, but such of them as have had their hands in the blood &
murder of the English, seizing and possessing at least a part of the Pequots

Counrey, which by right of conquest justly appertaines to the English: by sharing, or harbouring and withholding several Pequod-captives fled from the English, and making proud & insolent returns, when they were redemanded; and more lately the English had many strong & concurrent Indian testimonies, from Long-Island, Uncoway, Hartford, Kinnibuck and other parts, of Miantonimo's ambitious designs, travelling through all the plantations of the neighbouring Indians, and by promises & gift, labouring to make himselfe their universall Sagamore or Governour, perswading and engaging them, at once to cut off the whole body of the English in these parts. Which treacherous plots were confirmed by the Indians generall preparations, messages, insolencies and outrages against the English & such Indians as were subjects or friends to them: so that the English Colonies, to their great charge and damage, were forced to Arm, to keep strong watch day & night, and some of them to travell with convoyes from one plantation to another: and when Miantonimo in his circular travel was questioned at New-Haven concerning these things, in stead of other & better satisfaction he threatened to cut off any Indians head that should lay such a charge upon him to his face.

The Commissioners by the premises observed Miantonimo's proud and treacherous disposition, yet thought not fit to proceed against him in that respect, till they had collected more legal and convincing proof.

But while these things were under deliberation, Miantonimo was brought prisoner by Uncas to Hartford, and the case being opened & cleared as followeth, he craved the commissioners advice how to proceed with him.

It appeared that in a treaty made with the English at Massachusetts Anno 1637. Miantonimo engaged himselfe not to fight with any of the Indians, and particularly not to invade Uncas without the English consent; and after in a tripartit agreement made and concluded at Hartford betwixt Miantonimo & Uncas with reference to the English Anno 1638. in which one of the Articles runs, *Tons though either of the said Indian Sagamores should receive injurie from the other; yet neither of them shall make or begin war, untill they had appealed to the English, and till their grievances were first heard and determined, and if either of them should refuse, the English might assist against, & compell the refusing and obstinate partie.*

Notwithstanding which, Miantonimo and his confederates have both secretly and openly plotted and practised against the life of Uncas not
at all

at all acquainting the English or advising with them, but more especially of late since the fore-mentioned plots and designs were in hand.

First, a Pequot Indian one of Uncas his subjects in the Spring 1643 aiming at Uncas life, shot him with an arrow through the arm, and presently fled to the Narrowgankets or their confederates, boasting in the Indian plantations that he had killed Uncas; but when it was known Uncas (though wounded) was alive, the Pequot (taught as was supposed) changed his note, affirming that Uncas had cut through his owne arm with a flint, and had byred him to say he had shot and killed him.

Miantonimo being sent for by the Governour of the Massachusetts upon another occasion, brought this Pequot with him, and would have covered him with the former disguise, but when the English out of his owne mouth found him guilty, and would have sent him to Uncas his Sagamore Miantonimo earnestly desired he might not be taken out of his hands, promising he would send him safe to Uncas to be examined and punished. But fearing (as it seems) his owne treachery would be discovered, within a day or two, he stopped the Pequots mouth by cutting off his beard, but at parting he told the Governour in discontent, that he would come no more to Boston.

After this, some attempts were made (as is reported) to take away Uncas life by poyson and by Lincery; these failing, some of Sequassons company (an Indian Sagamore allyed unto, and an intimate confederate with Miantonimo) shot at Uncas with an arrow or two, as he was going down Connecticut river: Uncas according to the fore-mentioned treaty 1638 complained, and the English by mediation sought to make peace, but Sequasson expressing his dependance on Miantonimo refused, and chose war. They fought, and Uncas had the victorie.

Lastly, Miantonimo without any provocation from Uncas (under the disappointment of former plots provoked) and suddenly without denouncing war, came upon the Mohiggins with 900 or 1000 men; when Uncas had not halfe so many to defend himselfe. Uncas (before the battle) told Miantonimo, that he had many wayes sought his life, and for the sparing of bloud, offered by a single combate betwixt the selves to end the quarrel, but Miantonimo presuming upon his number of men, would have nothing but a battel.

but in the fall contrary to expectation, his men were roused, direct of considerable note slain, and himselfe taken prisoner.

These things being duly weighed, the Commissioners judged that Uncas could not be safe; while Miantonimo lived; wherefore they thought he might justly put such a treacherous, and bloud-thirsty enemy to death, but advised him to doe it in his owne Jurisdiction, without torture or crueltie. And Uncas having hitherto shewed himselfe a friend to the English, and in this and former outages (according to the treaty) craving their advise, if the Narragansets or their confederats should for his just execution unjustly assault him, the Commissioners for the Colonies promised to assist and protect him.

Uncas hereupon slew an enemy, but not the enmity against him. The Narragansets soon fell to new contrivements. They pretended they had paid a ransom for their Sachems life, and gave in particulars to the value of about 40 li. This for a while cast an imputation of foule & unjust dealing upon Uncas; but in September 1644. the English Commissioners meeting at Hartford, sent for the Narraganset Sachems & their Deputies desiring they might be instructed to make good their charge.

Uncas came himselfe, they sent their Deputies; but after due examination it appeared, though some loose discourses had passed that for such quanties of wampom and such parcels of other goods to a great value, there might have been some probability of sparing his life, yet no such parcels were brought, and the Narraganset Deputies did not alledge; much less prove, that any ransom was agreed, nor so much as any serious treaty begun, to redeem their imprisoned Sachem. And for the wampom and goods sent, as they were but small parcels and scarce considerable for such a purpose, so they were disposed by Miantonimo himselfe to sundry persons for curtesies received during his imprisonment, and upon hope of further favour.

The Narraganset Deputies saw their proofs fell far short of former pretences, and were silent. The Commissioners promised that upon better evidence hereafter, they should have due satisfaction.

Whereupon a truce was made, and both parties were engaged that all hostility should cease till planting time 1645: and after that, they would give thirty dayes warning either at the Massachusetts or Hartford before the truce should cease. Yet in February last, the Narragansets

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messengers by challenges sent to Boston, declared, that unless Uncas would
rester 160 fathom of wampum or come to a new hearing within six weeks
they would begin the war.

This crossed the former agreement, and the season was such, as
neither the Commissioners could be advised with; nor could Uncas travel
if notice had been given.

After which, about or before planting time,
Tantiqueyson a Mohiggin Captain who took Miantonimo prisoner, was
dangerously and treacherously wounded in the night as he slept in his wig-
wam: and other hostile acts were on both parts attempted, in a private
and under-hand way as they could take advantage each against other.

But since the Narragansets have at several times openly invaded
Uncas, so that Connecticut and New-haven were forced according to in-
gagement, to send men from those Colonies for his present defence: but
with expresse direction not to begin any offensive war against the Narra-
gansets or their confederates till further order.

In the mean time messengers were sent to the Narragansets from
the General Court in the Massachusetts, signifying the Commissioners meet-
ing, promising their grievances should be fully and justly heard, and re-
quiring a cessation of war in the mean time; but they refused: and bear-
ing probably that the English from the western Colonies were returned,
they made a new assault upon Uncas, and have done him much hurt.

The Commissioners being met, sent messengers the second time
both to the Narraganset and Mohiggin Indians, minding them of the
former treatise and truce, desiring them to send their Deputies instructed
and furnished with authority to declare and open the grounds of the war,
to give and receive due satisfaction, and to restore and settle peace.

At first the Narraganset Saché gave a reasonable and faire an-
swer, that he would send Guides with them to the Mohiggins, and if Un-
cas consented, he would send his Deputies to the Commissioners, and dur-
ing eight days hostilities should cease; but he soon repented of this modera-
tion, told the English messengers his minde was changed, sent private
instructions to the Niantik Sachem, after the del very of which, there was
nothing but proud & insolent passages: the Indian guides which the English
messengers brought with them from Pumbam and Socoononco were by
frownes and threatening speeches discouraged and refused; no other
Guides could be obtained though much pressed, they knew (as they ex-
pressed

pressed themselves) by the course held at Hartford last year, that the Commissioners would mediate & press for peace, but they were resolved to have no peace without Uncas his head; it mattered not who began the war, they were resolved to continue it; the English should withdraw their Garrison from Uncas, or they would take it as a breach of former covenant, & would procure as many Moquams as the English should affront them with: that they would lay the English cattle & heaps as high as their houses: that no English man should step out of doors to piss, but he should be killed. They reviled Uncas, charged him with cutting through his own arm, and saying the Narragansets had shot him; affirmed, that he would now murder the English messengers as they went or returned [if he had opportunity] and lay it upon the Narragansets.

The English messengers upon this rude and uncivil usage, wanting Guides to proceed, and fearing danger, returned to the Narragansets, acquainted Pessicus with the former passages, desired Guides from him, he [in scorn as they apprehended it] offered them an old Pequot Squaw, but would afford no other Guides. There also they conceived themselves in danger, three Indians with hatchets standing behind the Interpreter in a suspicious manner, while he was speaking with Pessicus, and the rest frowning & expressing much distemper in their countenance & carriage. The English messengers not hoping for better success at that time, departed; telling Pessicus that if he would return any other answer, he should send it to the English trading-house, where they intended to lodge that night. In the morning he invited them to return, and promised them a Guide to Uncas, but would grant no cessation of Arms. When they came to Providence they understood that in their absence a Narraganset Indian had bin there, and faining himself to be of Connetquot, spake in that dialect, but could not put off the Narraganset tone. He told Benedict Arnold's wife (who well understands the Indian language) that the English messengers should not passe to the Mohiggins, he knew they should have no Guides, but should be destroyed in the woods as they travelled toward Uncas.

Thus the English messengers returned, and the Interpreter under his hand & upon his oath related the former passages, with others less material more largely.

Mr. Williams by the messengers wrote to the Commissioners assuring them *That the Country would suddenly be all on fire, meaning by war; that by strong reasons & arguments he could convince any man thereof, that was of another*

their minds; That the Narragansets had been with the plantations combined with Providence and had solemnly created & sited a memorial with them, which sheweth their counsels and settled resolutions for warre.

Thus while the Commissioners in care of the publick peace, sought to quench the fire kindled amongst the Indians, these children of strife breake out threatnings, provocations and war against the English themselves, so that unless they should dishonour & provoke God, by violating a just engagement, and expose the Colonies to contempt & danger from the Barbarians, they cannot but exercise force, when no other means will prevail, to reduce the Narragansets and their confederates to a more just and sober temper.

The eyes of other Indians under the protection of the Massachusetts, and not at all engaged in this quarrel, are [as they have expressed themselves to the English messengers] fastened upon the English with strict observat^o, in what manner and measure they provide for Uncas safety. If he perish they will charge it upon them who might have preserved him: and no Indians will trust the English (if they now breake engagement) either in the present or succeeding generations. If Uncas be ruined in such a cause, they foresee their head, upon the next pretence shall be delivered to the wil of the Narragansets, with whom therefore they shall be forced to comply [as they may] for their future safety; & the English may not trust an Indian in the whole Country. The premises being duly weighed it, clearly appears that God call the Colonies to a warr.

The Narragansets and their confederates rest on their number, weapons, & opportunities to do mischief; and probably (as of old, Abime, Amalek and the Philistines with others did confederate against Israel) so Satan may stir up & combine many of his instruments against the Church of Christ: but their Redeemer is the Lord of Hosts, the Mighty One in

battle, all the shield of the earth are in his hand, he can save by few & by weak means, as well as by many & great.

In witness whereof.

JO: WINTHROP President, In the name of all the
Commissioners.